



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

U. S. MARINE CORPS FORCES COMMAND
1775 FORRESTAL DRIVE
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA 23551-2400

IN REPLY REFER TO

5060

SgtMaj

AUG 13 2019

U.S. MARINE CORPS FORCES COMMAND POLICY LETTER 6-19

From: Commander
To: Distribution List

Subj: GUIDANCE ON CONDUCT OF DRILL AND CEREMONIES

Ref: (a) MCO 5060.20

1. Situation. Marine Corps ceremonies are an important part of our military heritage. These ceremonies serve to recognize a change in senior leadership at a unit, to celebrate a Marine's or Sailor's career, and as an opportunity to showcase the professionalism and discipline of a unit. Unfortunately, the intended impact of these important events can be lost due to excessive length and deviation from the reference. As most of our ceremonies occur during the summer months, the extended length of these ceremonies combined with hot and humid weather can place our Marines, Sailors, and guests at risk. Therefore, Commanders should reduce the time Marines and Sailors spend in formation, especially during hot summer months.

2. Mission. To establish and promulgate a policy to mitigate risk associated with unit level ceremonies, to limit them to one hour or less, to ensure risk management is used in ceremonial planning, and to ensure compliance with the reference.

3. Execution

a. In accordance with the reference, Commanders will plan ceremonies to last no longer than one hour in duration. Commanders have the authority to tailor ceremonies to comply with this time limit while preserving the dignity and professionalism associated with these symbolic events. As such, Commanders shall:

(1) Ensure weather conditions are a major planning factor in all ceremonies and consider an inclement weather program if conditions may be prohibitive.

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(2) Ensure ceremonies are not conducted outdoors between the hours of 1100 - 1700 from June through September. Commanders should make every effort to conduct ceremonies when weather conditions are most favorable (early morning/early evening).

(3) Reviewing officers, outgoing Commanders/Sergeants Major (SgtsMaj) and retirees will deliver their comments in a five to seven minute time period.

(4) Incoming Commanders/SgtsMaj remarks shall not exceed the length of the outgoing Commanders/SgtsMaj.

b. Honors will be given to all General Officers participating in the ceremony unless otherwise deferred (i.e. breaking of the flag, ruffles and flourishes, etc.)

c. Personal awards are appropriate and may be presented during these ceremonies.

d. Certificates of Appreciation to spouses/family will only be presented during retirement ceremonies. Commanders will determine a more appropriate venue to recognize the spouse of an outgoing Commander or SgtMaj than during a Change of Command or Relief and Appointment ceremony. Spouse/family recognitions (i.e. Certificates of Appreciation) will not be presented during Change of Command/Relief and Appointment ceremonies, unless held in conjunction with a retirement ceremony; recognition during a retirement ceremony is authorized.

e. Per the reference, the reading of the "Watch" and the "Old Glory" flag presentation are not recognized as elements of a Marine Corps retirement ceremony, however, Commanders may conduct these presentations after the conclusion of the official retirement ceremonial sequence of events.

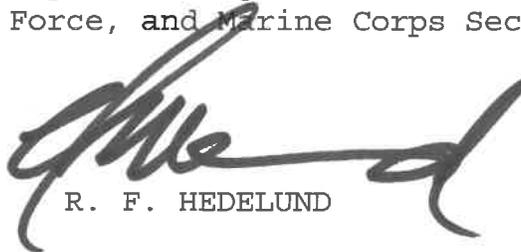
f. Respective subordinate Commanders who desire to deviate from this policy are required to submit a written request to the Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command. The request must include rationale for the deviation and it must provide a planned mitigation measure to safeguard our Marines, Sailors, and guests.

g. While this policy specifically addresses change of command, relief and appointment and retirement ceremonies, the spirit and intent also applies to memorial services, and other similar events being conducted at the unit level.

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4. Summary. In preserving the intent of the reference, limiting the amount of time required to conduct a ceremony, and proper planning for adverse weather conditions, these measures will ensure that the welfare of our Marines, Sailors, and guests is maintained.

5. Command and Signal. This policy letter will be effective the date signed and is applicable to Headquarters and Service Battalion, Marine Corps Security Force Regiment, Chemical Biological Incident Response Force, and Marine Corps Security Cooperation Group.



R. F. HEDELUND

Distribution: A, D and D1